FAQs for the July 2021 Uniform Bar Exam in Maryland

Exam administration questions:

What content will be tested on this exam?

- The July 2021 bar exam in Maryland will be a Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) consisting of two Multistate Performance Test (MPT) items, six Multistate Essay Examination (MEE) questions and 200 Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) questions. For more information on the UBE, visit: NCBE's UBE page.

What is the format and schedule for the July 2021 remote UBE?

- The July 2021 UBE in Maryland will be **administered remotely** using the Examplify testing software provided by ExamSoft Worldwide.

- The exam will be proctored through the applicant's webcam and microphone using the ExamID and ExamMonitor functions of the Examplify software, described below.

- The standard administration of the July 2021 UBE will occur on the following schedule (all times are Eastern Time):

Tuesday, July 27, 2021	9:00am - 10:30am	11:00am - 12:30pm	12:30pm - 2:00pm	2:00pm - 3:30pm	4:00pm - 5:30pm
	MPT1	MPT2	Lunch	MEE1-3	MEE4-6
Wednesday, July 28, 2021	9:00am - 10:30am	11:00am - 12:30pm	12:30pm - 2:00pm	2:00pm - 3:30pm	4:00pm - 5:30pm
	MBE 1-50	MBE 51-100	Lunch	MBE 101-150	MBE 151-200

- The schedules for applicant testing with accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act will vary from the standard schedule addressed above. The schedules for all accommodated applicants will consist of sixteen (16) testing sessions of varying lengths over four days with scheduled breaks of at least 30 minutes between each test session. Each examinee granted nonstandard testing accommodations for a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (the "ADA") will be contacted directly by SBLE regarding their accommodations for the July 2021 UBE in Maryland.

- Examinees will have a break between each exam session, during which they will be allowed to step away from their computer to stretch, use the bathroom, take medications, etc.

- **Applicants are required to test on schedule unless they encounter a technical issue or other emergency that requires a deviation from the schedule.**

  o **Applicants finishing any test session more than 30 minutes behind the posted ending time for that session must report their circumstances to SBLE at the end of that test session.**

- Prior to taking the July 2021 UBE in Maryland, applicants will be required to sign and return a Code of Conduct and provide a scanned copy of their valid, government issued photo ID.

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Where is the exam administered?

- Examinees may take the remotely administered UBE at their home, work/office, law school, library, or another location of their choice.

  - The environment should be quiet and distraction free, with no personal identifying information visible to the applicant's webcam.

- Some law schools are offering space for applicants who may not have a secure and reliable internet connection or suitable place to take the exam.

  - If your law school offers space for you to take the exam and is authorized to do so, it is permissible for you to take the exam at the law school provided that you are seated sufficiently far enough away from any other applicants in the classroom or other testing space to assure the security of the test and to minimize problems with the remote proctoring.

  - You will need to abide by all other instructions including remaining in your seat in view of your webcam throughout each session. It is the responsibility of the law school and applicant to make sure that all social-distancing protocols are followed and that no prohibited materials or devices are allowed in the examination space.

  - Remote proctoring through ExamSoft will still be in place.

  - **If your law school requires you to wear a mask for COVID-19 prevention reasons during the exam, the mask must be lowered during the Exam ID photo process.**

What testing conditions will be required?

- Examinees must be alone in the room where they are taking the exam unless testing in a law school where applicants must be sufficiently spaced apart in the classroom, lecture hall, or other testing space (see above). This should be a quiet and distraction-free environment.

- Examinees should remain seated with their entire face visible to the camera for the duration of each 90-minute test session.

  - During the mock exams, applicants must familiarize themselves with how they appear on their camera.

  - Examplify includes an "eyebrow" feature that allows the applicant to see what their own camera sees, which will be demonstrated in the mock exam.

  - Applicants should regularly check their camera view during the mock exams and on exam day to ensure their camera is functioning correctly and **showing their entire face**.

- **Phones, watches, and other electronic devices**:

  - Examinees should not have a phone, a watch or clock, or any electronic device other than their registered computer equipment in the testing area.

    - Examplify has timer and alarm functions for tracking time during the exam.

  - If a technology issue arises that requires a call to ExamSoft Support, the applicant may retrieve a phone and contact ExamSoft.

- o When the technology issue is resolved, the applicant must turn off the phone and remove the phone from the testing area.

- Applicants may not wear headphones, headsets, or earbuds during the exam. **Ordinary silicone or foam ear plugs are permitted provided the applicant displays them to the camera at the beginning of each exam session.**

- Applicants may not wear a hood, hat, cap or other head covering during the exam except for religious reasons in which case the head covering may not have a brim or otherwise obscure the applicant's eyes.

- Food, drinks, and medication

    - o Applicants are permitted to have food, drinks, medication (prescription and over-the-counter) and required medical devices in the testing area during the exam.

    - o Applicants are strongly cautioned that they bear the risk of damage to their computer equipment due to spilled drinks or other mishaps.

- Diplomas, photographs, or other items that might personally identify the applicant should not be visible to the applicant's webcam during the examination.

- Unless testing at a law school or other location where a COVID-19 mask is required, no masks should be work during testing.

What technology is required?

- Applicants may use a laptop or desktop computer that meets ExamSoft's minimum system requirements, including the system requirements for exams using ExamID and ExamMonitor.

    - o SBLE **strongly suggests** that applicants use computer equipment that meets ExamSoft's **RECOMMENDED** system requirements, which exceed the minimum requirements.

- Meeting minimum or recommended system requirements also includes having an up-to-date operating system.

    - o Update your operating system in advance of Exam Day.

    - o Applicants without updated operating systems risk being forced to perform lengthy mandatory updates on Exam Day.

    - o Applicants attempting to use an outdated operating system risk severe technical difficulty on Exam Day.

- Information on minimum and recommended system requirements are available at are available at https://bar.examsoft.com/system-requirements/ and https://ei.examsoft.com/GKWeb/login/mdbar

- **If your computer does not meet the minimum system requirements during the registration and mock exam process, you WILL receive a pop-up warning box from Examplify when beginning the mock exams**. DO NOT IGNORE THIS WARNING! It is your obligation to rectify any and all noted warned deficiencies with your computer.

    - o Please refer to this article for assistance with updating your device to meet the minimum system requirements: https://help.examsoft.com/s/article/Examplify-Update-Device-MSRs .

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- o Please note: This warning might require you to use another computer for the exam.

- o It is critically important that on each day of the examination the computer you registered continues to meet all minimum system requirements and have sufficient memory (both RAM and hard drive space) available. While the exam files are mostly text and are small, the monitoring files are videos with sound, and videos with sound are large. If your computer does not have sufficient available space to store all of the monitoring videos on the days of the exam, the software may stop recording and your exam may not be accepted for grading.

- **Applicants will need a reliable internet connection before and after each exam session** so they may obtain the password for each exam session, check in and begin each session, and upload their answer file and proctoring video at the close of each session.

  - o An active internet connection during each session is NOT required.

  - o Once applicants check in and begin the exam session, the exam proceeds offline until the applicant exits the exam session.

- **All examinees are required to have a webcam and microphone for check-in (ExamID) and for remote proctoring of the exam (ExamMonitor).**

  - o If your computer does not have an internal webcam and microphone, you may use an external webcam with microphone.

  - o You will need to test the use of the webcam and microphone during the mandatory mock exam. Information on testing your audio and video settings may be found at https://help.examsoft.com/s/article/Examplify-Take-an-Exam-with-ExamID-and-ExamMonitor and https://help.examsoft.com/s/article/Troubleshooting-Examplify-Microphone-using-Intel-SST

- **Applicants are permitted to use an external keyboard and/or an external mouse and/or an external monitor.**

  - o External keyboards, mice, and monitors must be configured for use during the mock exams.

  - o Examplify does NOT support dual monitors.

  - o If using an external monitor, applicants MUST also use an external webcam that is positioned at the top center of the external monitor.

  - o Using a webcam that is not positioned on top of the external monitor will cause the applicant to be flagged by Exam Monitor.

- **Any exam-day issue stemming from a failure or malfunction of the applicant's device hardware or operating system shall not be grounds for reconsideration or modification of examinee grades.**

- General information on Examplify for bar exams may be found at https://bar.examsoft.com/.

What is the registration process for the July 2021 remote UBE?

- **Applicants MUST uninstall all prior versions of Examplify prior to registering with ExamSoft for the July 2021 UBE.**

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- **ExamSoft will contact applicants directly by email on Thursday, June 17, 2021 with instructions for registering your computer**, downloading the Examplify software, downloading and taking the mandatory mock exams, and downloading the required exam files.

- ExamSoft's registration period will **open on Thursday, June 17, 2021 at or before 5:00pm ET.**

- ExamSoft registration will **close on Thursday, July 1, 2021 at 5:00pm ET**

- Applicants will be required to download an updated version of Examplify even if they already have a version of Examplify on their computer from college, law school, or a prior bar exam.

- It is extremely critical that all registration deadlines are strictly complied with as they will not be extended.

- **Applicants failing to complete the registration process by the July 1 registration deadline will be administratively withdrawn from the exam. No fees will be refunded.**

- **Applicants taking the July 2021 UBE must use the most recent Examplify version (2.7 or newer as determined by ExamSoft and SBLE).**

Mock Exams

- **All applicants will be REQUIRED to take two mandatory mock exams, which will be available for download after registering with ExamSoft.**

    o During the first mock exam applicants will establish their baseline photo ID that will be used for exam day and set their camera and microphone settings.

    o Applicants will be guided through a review of the features of the software and have an opportunity to practice with those features.

    o The second mock exam will contain practice questions supplied by NCBE and applicants may practice using all the software features using those exam questions.

        ▪ The practice questions will not be graded and are only for purposes of practicing with the features of Examplify

- Completing the mandatory mock exams is part of the application process. Applicants must upload both mock exam answer files by the registration deadline to complete the registration process.

- **Applicants failing to complete and upload both mandatory mock exams by the July 1 registration deadline will be administratively withdrawn from the exam. No fees will be refunded.**

- Each mock exam will be 90 minutes in length. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use ALL the available time on both mock exams to familiarize themselves with the features of the testing software AND to confirm their computer equipment is functioning correctly AND to confirm the suitability of their testing location.

    o It is extremely important for each applicant to fully test the compatibility of their computer equipment with the testing software.

    o This includes issues related to memory and storage space, which may not be fully tested without spending at least one full 90-minute exam session in the mock exam.

- o *Applicants receiving extra time on the exam pursuant to ADA Test Accommodations will NOT receive extra time on the mock exams.*

- A third mock exam ("Mock Exam 3") will be available for additional practice with the software. This Mock Exam 3 is OPTIONAL, but highly encouraged.

Exam Day Files

- On Monday, July 19th on or before 5:00 PM ET, ExamSoft will contact registered applicants directly by email with instructions for downloading the required Exam Day files. The deadline to download the Exam Day files is Thursday, July 22nd at 5:00 PM ET.

- Failure to timely download the Exam Day files will result in your withdrawal from the examination and the forfeiture of your fees.

Technical Issues and Technical Support

- **Many technical issues that may arise during a mock exam or on Exam Day (e.g., black screen, screen freeze, screen lag, etc.) can be resolved by restarting the device. You should attempt to repair any such issue by restarting your device BEFORE calling ExamSoft Support:**
  - o Turn off your device by pressing and holding the power button until it shuts down.
  - o Wait 5 seconds, then restart your device by pressing the power button.
    - Examplify will restart automatically.
    - Once Examplify restarts, it will return to within 59 seconds of where you left off in the exam at the time you rebooted.
  - o If prompted for a resume code due to any delay in restarting your device, you must contact ExamSoft Support at 1-866-429-8889 for a resume code.

- **DO NOT attempt to repair any technical issue by using the "Exam Controls" to exit the exam.** If you exit the exam, your answer (or lack of answer) will automatically upload and you will not be able to reenter the exam file.

- ExamSoft will have dedicated phone response for bar applicants for general inquiry and technical assistance throughout the registration process and during the bar exam.
  - o During the exam, Applicants are permitted to access their phones for technical support, but phones must be removed from the testing area after the support call ends.
  - o SBLE suggests storing ExamSoft's support number **(866) 429-8889** in your phone for ExamDay.

- ExamSoft will also have live online chat assistance prior to exam day.
  - o Chat assistance is NOT available from the registered device while the applicant is logged into the secure software.
  - o DO NOT attempt to use online chat assistance on Exam Day.

Will applicants have to pay a separate fee for the Examplify software?

- NO. SBLE will pay the registration fee for each applicant.

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What features will examinees be able to use within the exam software?

- On the MPT and MEE sessions of the exam, applicants WILL be able to:

  - **View the MPT materials and MEE questions as a pop-out attachment.**

  - Resize and zoom in the attachment window.

  - **Search and highlight text in the attachment**

  - Adjust the font size in the answer field.

  - Use the spell-check, highlighter and "find and replace" features in the answer field

  - Use the "Notes" feature (i.e. virtual scratch paper) to outline responses.

    - Cut/copy/paste from the Notes to the answer field

      - SBLE urges use of "copy/paste" rather than "cut/paste"

      - **SBLE urges extreme caution in using the Notes section to compose exam answers with the intent of copying the text to the answer field.** *Text appearing in the Notes section is not part of the exam answer file and will not be retrieved or graded.*

  - On the MPT sessions **ONLY** - use physical scratch paper.

    - All physical scratch paper and writing instruments must be removed from the testing area prior to the start of the MEE sessions

- On the MBE questions, applicants WILL be able to:

  - Highlight within the text of each question.

  - Strike out unwanted answers or answers you believe to be incorrect as you read the multiple-choice questions.

    - **Applicants must select an answer (and not just strike through purported incorrect answers) in order to receive credit for a correct answer.**

    - **Applicants should look for the question number to change from blue letters in a white-filled circle to white letters in a blue-filled circle AND for a blue border around the selected answer AND a notification about the currently selected answer for the question.**

  - Navigate forward and backward between questions, as well as skip and/or return to unanswered questions during each session.

  - Flag multiple-choice questions to which you would like return to during that session.

  - Use the Notes (i.e., virtual scratch paper) for each question.

  - Filter the sidebar list of question numbers to identify questions that remain unanswered.

- Applicants WILL **NOT** be able to:

  - Use more than one monitor. (External monitor – YES; Dual monitor – NO)

  - Cut and paste or drag and drop text from the text of the MEE question or the text of the MPT question and library to their answer.

- Underline, circle, or cross out text within the MEE and MBE questions or the MPT materials (highlight only).

- Use physical scratch paper, notes, or any other physical reference materials on the MEE and MBE sections of the exam. **PHYSICAL SCRATCH PAPER IS PERMITTED ON THE MPT SESSION ONLY.**

How does ExamID work?

- ExamID authenticates the identity of applicants to ensure that the person taking the exam is the person who registered for the exam.

- During the first mock exam ExamID will take a baseline photo of the applicant.

  - Applicants are required to have a well-lit room to provide adequate lighting for the photo.

  - Applicants should review ExamSoft's "Lighting Tips" document for information on establishing a baseline photo.

  - Applicants may not wear a face covering during the Exam ID process during mock exams or on exam day.

  - Applicants testing in law school space or another location where facemasks are required MUST lower their mask for the ExamID process. Masks may be replaced after verifying the ExamID photo.

  - It is highly recommended that applicants take this baseline photo in the same well-lit room where they intend to take the exam.

- At the start of each session on Exam Day, ExamID will take another photo of the applicant and will compare it to the photo taken during the mock exam to authenticate the applicant's identity.

  - *The exam day photo is only compared to your baseline photo taken on your device and that you approved for use.*

  - *Your ExamID photo is NOT compared to the photos of other exam takers or other photo databases.*

- **So long as ExamID can capture a picture of the applicant at the start of each session on Exam Day, the applicant will be admitted to that exam session.**

  - **Should ExamID fail to verify the Exam Day photo at the beginning of an exam session, SBLE will authenticate the applicant's identity after the exam through the ExamMonitor video and the applicant's previously submitted photo ID.**

  - **Applicants are never prevented from entering an exam session because Exam ID photos failed to match.**

How does ExamMonitor (remote proctoring) work?

- Examinees must remain at their computer, with their face fully visible to their webcam, for the entirety of each 90-minute test session.

- The proctoring software will record the applicant (audio and video) throughout the exam session. The recording will be uploaded to ExamSoft along with the examinee's answer files.

- After the exam, ExamSoft's artificial intelligence (AI) program will analyze the recording and will flag any unusual behaviors, movements, or sounds.

- All flagged footage is then reviewed by at least one human proctor to determine whether further analysis as to potential cheating is necessary.

- **The mere fact that a sound or behavior generates a flag does not necessarily mean that SBLE will formally investigate or charge any applicant with exam misconduct.**

- The proctors reviewing exam footage **will not** have access to any personally identifying information for examinees; all exam materials, including exam footage, are connected only to an examinee ID number.

- SBLE will destroy and/or direct ExamSoft to destroy all video recordings from the examination within a reasonable time after the completion of all grading or, where misconduct investigations are initiated, after resolution of any misconduct investigation, including any related Character and Fitness proceedings.

Post examination questions

When may applicants uninstall the Examplify software?

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to retain the Examplify software on their computers until at least the release of exam results in case there is a need to manually recover answers from the software after upload. This is a recommendation only and is in place for the protection of examinees.

How will the remote examination be graded and scored?

- Answers to the MEE and MPT questions will be graded by the Board. The written scores will be scaled to the MBE.

- The MBE will be scored and scaled by NCBE.

- The components of the examination will be weighted 50% for the MBE, 30% for the MEE and 20% for the MPT.

- Final scores will be reported on a 400-point scale and a scaled score of 266 or greater is required to pass the examination.

- Applicants must take on the schedule listed at the top of this document and must timely upload all sessions of the remote examination in order to be graded.
  - File uploads should be completed as soon after the last exam session as possible, and not later than the following deadlines:
    - The exam files must be uploaded by 11:59pm on Wednesday, July 28, 2021.
    - The video proctoring files must be uploaded by 11:59pm on Friday, July 30, 2021.
  - Any applicant who does not check into, complete, and upload answer files and video proctoring files for all sessions of the exam is subject to being withdrawn from the examination and not receiving examination results.
  - If an applicant is ultimately unable to complete the exam or upload exam files or video proctoring files due to technological failures will NOT be considered to have failed the exam, but rather will be treated as absent in Maryland.
  - Applicants who access some but not all of the exam content may be considered to have taken exam.

    o Being absent or withdrawn from the July 2021 Remote UBE will have no effect on the ability of the applicant to register for and take a subsequent bar exam in Maryland.

When will results be available?

- SBLE expects to release the results of the July 2021 remote UBE on Friday, November 5, 2021.

When will the formal admission ceremonies take place?

- All aspects of admission ceremonies are planned and executed by the Court of Appeals of Maryland and no final decisions have been made regarding such ceremonies.

  o Formal admission ceremonies for applicants who are successful on the July 2021 UBE and complete all other admissions requirements are expected to be scheduled for December 2021.

  o Whether admissions ceremonies will be in-person or virtual will depend on the status of the COVID-19 emergency.